

《China meets West through music and culture》

During the Chinese spring festival, Chinese music performances can be spotted in countries around the world. But its not so often to find Chinese instruments played by American students in U.S. Public schools.

At Laney College, in Oakland, California - a rare site -- the two-string violin, the Chinese Flute, the lute, the moon guitar, the mouth organ and the hammered dulcimer.

The Great Wall Youth Orchestra uses Chinese instruments to perform music from different parts of the world.

Sherlyn Chew started the orchestra 20 years ago after she found 30 Chinese instruments inside the closet of her own Chinese music teacher, who had just passed away.

"I think music is very important for the development of the whole person. 10:36 And here, we are teaching music using traditional instruments, Chinese instruments to teach world music. The statement is that we are here to celebrate our differences," Sherlyn Chew, founder of Purple Silk Music, said.

"I like the melodies. And how it sounds different from Western music," Moon guitar player Vivian Yan said.

"They have a chance to learn how my culture, I am from China. So, I want them to know how is the Chinese music," Vivian's mother Jie Chen said.

While the vast majority of participants are Chinese-Americans, non-Chinese can be just as dedicated - some even studying and excelling at Chinese Opera.

The 200 members of the Great Wall Youth Orchestra practice here each week at Laney College in California where they even get college credit. In addition, the program also reaches out to local public elementary schools"

That pioneering idea - introducing Chinese instruments to American public schools -- is how 11-year-old Iyobosa Enabulele became interested in the Chinese Flute.

"It's fun playing with other people and hearing the way the music sounds together, it sounds really nice," Chinese flute player Yobosa Enabulele said.

Having attended Chinese Immersion school much of his life, Harry Bernholz even quit playing the piano to focus on the Moon Guitar.

"I've just grown up being surrounded by Chinese culture and so I just found it more interesting and I really think the

instruments are nice sounding," Moon guitar player Harry Bernholz said.

"In today's culture, I think it's good to be broad and to broaden your horizons and learn as much as you can," Harry's father Jeffery Burke said.

While many of the students don't have the financial resources for private lessons, the program has focused on being affordable while bringing in top teachers from places like the Shanghai Conservatory and the Central National Chinese Orchestra.

It also gives the children numerous opportunities to perform in public venues, spreading their appreciation and passion for music from all over the world.

